



Newly Released "Cost of Living in Nunavik, Research Report": An Important First Step towards Sustainable Solutions

Kuujuuaq, Québec, December 7, 2016 – Following 16 months of intensive data collection and meticulous analysis, the "*Cost of Living in Nunavik, Research Report*" was made public during the Kativik Regional Government's (KRG) November council sitting. The study represents the outcome of an important collaborative effort between the Québec government, the KRG and Makivik Corporation who mandated Université Laval to evaluate the region's cost of living and at the same time providing input for discussions on long-term solutions.

Between January 2015 and April 2016, six Nunavik communities on the Hudson and Ungava coasts were designated based on their population size and 450 randomly-selected households took part in the survey. The participants completed a questionnaire and reported all family-members expenditure during a two-week period. In total, the survey measured 3,682 consumer goods and services – five times more than Statistics Canada uses to calculate the Consumer Price Index.

"The study released today represents some very valuable data on some well-known issues, but not so well documented. It will help us to continue the work already begun by the Plan Nord, to accompany the communities of Nunavik in their development efforts. The results from this study will contribute to focus our interventions, particularly about housing", Minister Pierre Arcand said.

"The Government of Quebec contributed to this research project because we want to improve the quality of life of Nunavimmiut. The purpose of the study was to better understand the variables that make up the cost of life in Nunavik and we will examine its conclusions attentively. We believe an important first step has been reached and we look forward to continuing our work with the Kativik Regional Government and Makivik Corporation on this matter", said Geoffrey Kelley, Minister responsible for Native Affairs.

The survey broke down households according to income level – low, medium, and high. In the survey, households ranged in size from single people living alone to a household with six adults with seven children, for example. Based on the income level of these households, both could be considered low income according to the "low income measure" (LIM) methodology used in the study, adapted from the StatsCan LIM standard.

The results for the low-income households are of particular concern. The survey reveals low-income households spend 43.3% of revenue on food, versus 36.6% for medium-income, and 30.5% for high-income households. The same trend is clear for shelter, with the low-income segment spending 27% on shelter, versus just over 22% for medium and high-income

households. When food and shelter are combined low-income households are spending over 70% of their income on the most basic necessities.

"I would like to thank all Nunavimmiut who participated to the lengthy survey", said Makivik President Jobie Tukkiapik. "This tremendous group effort will definitely help in developing durable solutions to the very high cost of living in Nunavik. The pricing gap for the majority of basic necessities is still considerable between our region and the South, and the impact is even more significant for low income households."

"This report was made possible by KRG employees' outstanding commitment, as well as the helpfulness of 450 households in Nunavik", mentioned KRG Chairperson Jennifer Munick. "The statistics and the conclusions resulting from the survey clearly indicate the struggles families are facing due to the very high cost of living in our region and I'm convinced it'll support us in our repeated demands to the different government bodies."

Finally, the survey allowed the creation of a database that could be used to analyze the impacts of potential cost of living reduction measures or monitor implemented ones. To consult the report or learn more about Université Laval's Nunivaat program, follow this link: www.nunivaat.org/Publications.aspx.

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The KRG is a non-ethnic public organization created in 1978, under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. The organization has jurisdiction over nearly the entire territory of Québec north of the 55th parallel in areas such as municipal matters, transportation, the environment, policing, employment, labour training, income security, childcare services, renewable resources, land-use planning, civil security and economic development.

Makivik is the development corporation mandated to manage the heritage funds of the Inuit of Nunavik provided for under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. Makivik's role includes the administration and investment of these funds and the promotion of economic growth by providing assistance for the creation of Inuit-operated businesses in Nunavik. Makivik promotes the preservation of Inuit culture and language as well as the health, welfare, relief of poverty, and education of Inuit in the communities.